

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5 The invention provides a method of detection of an
imprint of a postal indicium at a location on a mail
piece. The method involves utilising a sensor to scan
along a band on the mail piece to detect a sequence of
transitions between light and dark reflectance areas
within a band extending across the said location. AN
10 indication of the presence of the imprint of the postal
indication is generated in response to detection of a
transition succeeding a predetermined number of initial
transitions at a start of the sequence of transitions.

15 The invention also provides apparatus for imprinting
postal indicia on mail pieces. The apparatus comprises
a printer operable to print a postal indicium in a
required location on the mail piece. A first sensor is
provided that is responsive to reflectance transitions
20 between light and dark along a band of the mail piece
extending across the said location. The first sensor
generates a sequence of first signals corresponding
respectively to reflectance transitions along the said
band. The apparatus further includes means operative in
25 response to a first signal occurring after a
predetermined number of said first signals at a start of
said sequence to generate a second signal which is
indicative of a postal indicium imprint on the mail
piece.